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If T was night in Maraopolla, the capital city of Mars. Overhead shone the two moons, Phobos and Deimos. All was quiet as Lieutenant Jon Jarl of the Space Police softly approached the door of and old ramshackle house on the outskirts of town. He took a deep breakt The end of a long trail.

Jon pulled out his ray gun and kicked open the door. Within, a short man with a shrewd, intelligent face spun about in surprise.

"Reach," commanded Jon. "Got you at last, Science Slade! You led me a merry chase from planet to planet, following your series of robberies And always pulling your scientific tricks, which made you the most cunning eriminal known today."

Slade recovered quickly from hie surprise. He sneered. "But like a faithful bloodhound, you kept on my trail And now you've got me, haven't you? Always get your man, don't you, asae copper?"

Jon frowned, a bit worriedly. His tone was sarcastic. And instead of being dismayed, Science Shade accemed quitte at ease, as though he expected to escape But how could he? Jon could see he had no gun. Yet why was he grinning?

"Ready for the handcuffs?" Jon said, taking them out.

"Sure, if you can put them on me," said Slade mockingly. He waved around. "By the way, you"ll notice this old dump is outfitted as my laboratory. I've been hiding out here for a month, before you tracked me down. And I've been working on something very sneelal."

"Skip it," snapped Jon. "Just hold out your hands for the cuffs, chum." Jon strode forward warily.

"I've been working on this belt," said Slade. It was a queer-looking belt around bis middle with several studs on it. Slade pressed one just as Jon came up, and Jon gasped

Slade suddenly began to expand before his eyes. His body bulged out in all directions, and became huge and queerly distorted. And when Jon tried to grab his wrist, he met mothing solid. It was exactly like trying to grab ... "Smokel" chorted Slade himself, "I've pu turned into mokel That's my new scientifitrick. In more scientific terms, this belt give off an anti-majecular adhesion ray. Thus, the molecules of my body, instead of atikity together as a solid, have turned into a gason smoke. Why don't you grab me, cooper? Way don't you put the handeuffs on me?"

Jon grabbed wildly, feeling like a fool. Hi hands met nothing solid. He could no mox seize Siade now than he could a cloud or 1 puff of steam. Panting, Jon fell back so simed hie ray gun. "I'm going to shoot," h warned.

"Go shead," laughed Slade. "See what heppens,"

That whe the most bewildering thing of al, as Jon shot. His ray only went through the smoky form, meeting nothing solid, asi burned holes in the wall beyond. Slade, in his smoke-form, could not be shot or killed!

Jon stared helplessly. The criminal's body had now expanded into a giant bulging form twenty feet higb, towaring high over Jon

"Remember the old Arabian Night's tais of the genie in the bottle?" shortled Slads. "That's what I am now-a modern genie? I'm made of vagrant smoke. You can't grab m or shoot me. I'm utterly safe now from capture or y ail?"

"You mean you're going to etay in that emoke-form the rest of your life?" gasped Jon.

"Don't be an idiot," returned Slade's booming voice. "My belt can also return me to solid form, when needed. So long, copper. Out the window I go!"

The smoky form started to coze out the open window. Jon rushed and slammed if shut. Slade laughed. "So I'll coze out the cracks. You can't stop smoke, my boy!"

Before Jon's dazed eyes, the smoky form simply sorred out through the window crashs and took form outside, learing back. "Wair!" you hear of the robberies I'll pull now!" wers Slade's parting words. And then, like smoke is form drifted away into the dark night.

Jon stood stunne' There was no use to

follow. How could ha chass smoke? Science Slade had once more evaded the law, and was ready to continue his amazing crims career.

In the following week, Marsopolis was recked by a series of amazing robberies. Jon could see how it was worked. In his smokeform, Slade could easily coze into any locked place, through tiny holes or cracks, Within, he could resume solid form and steal, with nohole the wire: It was diabolically simple.

Jon had warned all the local police, and they had provled the town. But the few times they cugats sight of Slade, he was able to assume his smoke-form, and taunt them, and whisk wwwy like a formless shadow. Slade was the criminal who could not be caught!

And then one day, supremely confident of this powers, State mailed a moching challings to hadpuarters. "Tonight is the big Planet Bull, Wonnen will be waring their most valuable yeeds. Try to keep me out!" The police took estreme preclaution. After the guests had arrived, every door and window was such at the Hermitely seated. The lower this to the guests. But now, not even smake could one into the scaled place.

Jon Jarl was on duty inside, watching the gay party in progress. How could Slade get in, as he boasted? For once he had outemarted himself-or had he? Jon was worried. Did Slade have some other trick up his sleeve? Could he somehow get in, like a magic genie?

Genie ... genie ... the word kept repeating itself in Jon's mind. And auddenly, remembering the old legend, another phrase popped up-"the genie in the bottle!"

Jon whirled, his eyes scanning the room where the guests sat at tables, eating and drinking. At the far end of the room he saw it happening.

On one table rested several wine bottles. One of the guests uncorked another bottle, but ne wine poured out, instead, black smoke cams out, forming the huge genie-form of Science Slads!

"Signing planets!" Jon exclaimed, dashing for the far end of the room. "That was his are in the hole. He compressed himself into a bottle and had himself delivered into the place! Exactiv like a genie from a bottle!"

Before Jon reached the spot, Slade had already acted. He pressed his belt stud and quickly resumed solid form, snatching a diamond necklace from the throat of a woman. This he quickly stuffed into a belt pouch where it would stay, even in his smoke form.

"But you're still trapped!" Jon shouted as he ran. "Now you can't get out. The place is scaled."

But Slade was already shooting upward with his ray gun, forming a burned hole in the roof. Then, a touch of his belt stud and he turned to smoke again, just as Jon ran up futilely.

"Sce?" gloated the smoke-form. "I had it all planned in detail. I shot an escape hole in the roof. Now I just ooze out of it-free !"

The smoke-form wafted upward and began pouring itself out the hole. But J on did not wait to watch, helplessly. He was dashing upstairs to the roof himself. He rayed open the senied skylight and sprang out on the roof, racing to where the smoke-form of the crimisal had cozed out and formed.

"Well?" mocked Slade. "And how are you going to stop me here, my stupid friend? Now I just drift away with the breeze."

Jon was silent, as he hastly pulled a concented gadget from under his cost. It had a flaring tubular snout and a small motor and a trailing tube. It hummed, as Jon turned it on. He aimed it at the smoke-form.

Slade laughed wildly. "A new kind of gun?" he snid. "But you just can't shoot or harm smoke, you dimwit cop! Don't you understand?"

"I know I can't shoot or barm you." Jon grinned. "This happens to be the latest Smoke Vacuum, for clearing smoke out of rooms. In other words, this is suction?"

SLADE gasped, in sudden realisation, and tried to move his smoke-form away. But the powerful auction device was already tugging at him, pulling his gaseous body into its tube. Slade was succioned out of the air swiftly and pumped through the tube. And at the end of the tube, Jon held a bottle.

A moment later, Jon firmly put the cork on the bottls, filled with the compressed smoke-form of Science Slade. He held the bottle up to his eyes, smiling.

"Cramped, Slade?" he said. "But we'll let you out soon, at Headquarters, in a sealed room, where you'll be forced to asume solid form. We'll take your belt away, and then elap you behind bars, once and for all."

Jon grinned. "Just call me Aladdin." THE END











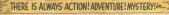






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